

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 /087 W
-----007768 301400Z /43

R 301207Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4429
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, IN
SUBJ: PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON FOREIGN POLICY

REF: NEW DELHI 9055

SUMMARY. IN OPENING THE DEBATE ON FOREIGN POLICY IN THE
LOK SABHA JUNE 29, FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE PLACED EVEN
MORE EXPLICIT STRESS ON INDIA'S POLICY OF "GENUINE NON-
ALIGNMENT" THAN HAD BEEN IN MINISTRY'S ANNUAL REPORT
(REFTEL). IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEED FOR COOPERATION
ACROSS IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND MILITARY FRONTIERS IN
ORDER TO ATTAIN WORLD PEACE, HE WELCOMED PRESIDENT
CARTER'S STATEMENT THAT ANTICOMMUNISM WAS NO LONGER
THE THRUST OF US FOREIGN POLICY. VAJPAYEE SAID THE
CONTINUITY OF INDIA'S NON-ALIGNED POLICY WAS BASED ON
NATIONAL CONSENSUS AND EMPHASIZED THE FLEXIBILITY OF
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THAT POLICY, THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE, AND THE
MUTUAL AS WELL AS NATIONAL BENEFITS TO BE DERIVED FROM
IT. HE REITERATED THAT INDIA'S FIRST PRIORITY WAS
IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS AND ADVOCATED
SUBCONTINENTAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION. ONLY BANGLADESH
WAS MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY AS VAJPAYEE DENIED ALLEGA-
TIONS THAT THE GOI WAS REFUSING REFUGE TO DISSIDENT

BANGLADESHIS. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION WAS REPEATED. REGARDING THE UNITED STATES, VAJPAYEE NOTED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION "IS TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT THE WORLD TO FIND A NEW BALANCE BETWEEN THEIR OWN NATIONAL INTERETS AND A MORE COOPERATIVE WORLD ORDER." VAJPAYEE MADE NO REFERENCE TO NUCLEAR ISSUES, ARMS SUPPLY TO THE SUBCONTINENT, OR THE INDIAN OCEAN. THESE ISSUES WERE RAISED BY SOME MPS IN THE SUBSEQUENT DEBATE. END SUMMARY.

1. IN PARLIAMENT JUNE 29, FOREIGN MINISTER A.B. VAJPAYEE WAS PARTICULARLY EXPLICIT IN ENUNCIATING AND SPELLING OUT THE MEANING OF INDIA'S POLICY OF "GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT", PLACING AN EVEN GREATER STRESS ON THIS CONCEPT THAN DID HIS MINISTRY IN ITS ANNUAL REPORT ISSUED LAST WEEK (REFTEL). VAJPAYEE SAID THAT INDIA SHOULD NOT ONLY REMAIN NON-ALIGNED BUT MUST ALSO APPEAR TO BE SO. "IF ANYTHING THAT WE SAY OR DO," HE SAID, "GIVES RISE TO THE FEELING THAT WE HAVE LEANED TOWARDS A PARTICULAR BLOCK AND HAVE SURRENDERED OUR SOVEREIGN RIGHT OF JUDGING ISSUES ON THEIR MERIT, IT WILL BE A DEVIATION FROM THE STRAIGHT BUT DIFFICULT PATH OF NON-ALIGNMENT." VAJPAYEE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE CONTINUITY OF "THIS OLD TENET" OF NON-ALIGNMENT RESTED UPON NATIONAL CONSENSUS. AFTER STATING THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO SEEKING PEACE EXCEPT THROUGH POSITIVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COOPERATION ACROSS IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND MILITARY FRONTIERS, THE FOREIGN MINISTER SAID: "WE CANNOT BUT COMMEND THE DECLARATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES THAT ANTI-COMMUNISM WILL NOT BE THE TEST OR DRIVE OF AMERICA'S POLICIES, AND WE ARE LIKEWISE CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO THE SEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL DETENTE AND THE EASING OF TENSIONS AMONG NATIONS."

2. IN DELINEATING INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY VAJPAYEE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE THEMES OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND MUTUAL BENEFIT AND THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE NON-ALIGNED POLICY. INDIA, HE SAID, CAN BE SELF-CONFIDENT ENOUGH "TO CLASP THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP EVERYWHERE" AND TO WELCOME COOPERATION BASED ON DIGNITY AND JUDGED BY THE "TOUCHSTONE OF NATIONAL AND MUTUAL BENEFIT", BECUASE INDIA IS A STRONGR NATION TODAY. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE THE GOVERNMENT WILL STAND BY THE BROAD OUTLINES OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY AND "WILL RESPECT ALL INHERITED OBLIGATIONS", IT SHOULD NOT BE MISTAKEN FOR A POLICY OF "RIGID IMMOBILISM". THE WORLD WAS CHANGING, INDIA WAS DEVELOPING NEW DIMENSIONS TO ITS

ECONOMIC CAPACITIES, AND THE REponsibility OF THE NEW
GOVERNMENT IS TO BRING FRESH SCRUTINY TO INTERNATIONAL
PROBLEMS AS THEY ARISE.

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR TEXT

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3. VAJPAYEE RESTATED THAT INDIA'S FIRST PRIORITY WAS
TO PROMOTE COOPERATION AND TRUST WITH IMMEDIATE
NEIGHBORS, AND THAT INDIA RECOGNIZES THEIR RIGHT "TO
DETERMINE THEIR SEPARATE NATIONAL FULFILLMENT", AND
ALTHOUGH "VIGILANT ABOUT OUR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY".
WOULD POSE NO THREAT TO THEIR NATIONAL PERSONALITIES.
VAJPAYEE SAID THAT IT WAS IN THE INTEREST OF INDIA
AND ITS NEIGHBORS TO "FORGE THE SINEWS OF ECONOMIC
COOPERATION IN THE SUBCONTINENT" AND TO EASE THE BURDENS
OF THE PEOPLE SO THAT "SOME OF THE SWORDS CAN BE TURNED
INTO PLOUGH SHARES" AND THE COMMON ENEMY OF POVERTY
ATTACKED. ONLY BANGLADESH RECEIVED SPECIAL ATTENTION.
VAJPAYEE MENTIONED PROGRESS ON FARAKKA AND DENIED THAT
INDIA HAD REFUSED REFUGE TO BANGLADESHIS. HIGH
OFFICERS, HE SAID, HAD INVESTIGATED THE ALLEGATIONS
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AND FOUND THAT NO FORCE OR COMPULSION HAD BEEN USED NOR
HARDSHIPS INFLICTED UPON BANGLADESHIS IN INDIA.

4. OF THE SOVIET UNION, VAJPAYEE SAID THAT THE GOI
BELIEVES THAT THE USSR "RECOGNIZES FULLY THAT THE NEW
GOVERNMENT IN OFFICE ENJOYS THE FULL CONFIDENCE OF
THE INDIAN PEOPLE." HE THEN REPEATED THE OFTEN-
STATED JANATA GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT RELATIONS WITH
EASTERN EUROPE HAD NOT SUFFERED FROM THE CHANGE IN
GOVERNMENT AND SHOULD FURTHER IMPROVE. HE ADDED THAT
"UNLIKE THE APPARENT JUDGMENT OF THE PREVIOUS GOVERN-
MENT" THE JANATA ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT THINK THAT
RELATIONS WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES "IN ANY WAY INHIBIT"
IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE USA AND WESTERN EUROPE.
THE CLIMATE FOR RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF
RELATIONS WITH CANADA AND THE USA IS "PROFITABLE."
HE SAID THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN THE USA "IS
TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT THE WORLD TO FIND A NEW BAL-
ANCE BETWEEN THEIR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND A MORE
COOPERATIVE WORLD ORDER." THE DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES
BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER DESAI AND PRESIDENT CARTER HE
SAID WERE "CHARACTERIZED BY WARMTH AND UNDERSTANDING
AND AUGUR WELL FOR THE FUTURE." VAJPAYEE ALSO SAID
THAT "WE HOPE THE USA IN ITS POLICIES WILL ASSIST THE
PROCESS OF STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA WHICH IS THE GOAL
OF OUR NATIONAL POLICIES."

5. REFERENCES TO CHINA AND TO OTHER REGIONS OF THE
WORLD FOLLOWED THE THRUST OF THE MINISTRY'S ANNUAL
REPORT. EXCEPT FOR STANDARD RHETORIC REGARDING SOUTHERN
AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL
ISSUES WERE NOT MENTIONED. VAJPAYEE MADE NO REFERENCE
TO NUCLEAR MATTERS TO ARMS SUPPLY TO THE SUBCONTINENT
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OR TO THE INDIAN OCEAN.

6. INITIATING THE LOK SABHA DEBATE AFTER VAJPAYEE'S
SPEECH, RAMESHWAR RAO, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE CONGRESS
PARTY, POINTEDLY SAID THE SOVIET UNION HAD ALWAYS
SUPPORTED INDIA IN ALL CRISES, WHICH WAS NOT TRUE OF
MANY COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH CONCEDED IT WAS A DELICATE
SUBJECT, HE ALSO SAID THAT INDIA MUST MOVE FORWARD WITH
ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND "SHOULD NOT BE AT THE MERCY
OF ANY COUNTRY." SAMAR GUHA, A LEADER OF THE
SOCIALIST WING OF THE JANATA PARTY, EMOTIONALLY SAID

THAT GOI OFFICIALS WERE NOT OBEYING POLICY ON BANG-
LADESHI REFUGEES AND THAT 16 BANGLADESHIS HAD BEEN
EXECUTED AFTER BEING FORCED TO RETURN HOME. HE ALSO
ATTACKED GENERAL ZIA'S "THEOCRATIC POLITICS" AND SAID
THE HINDUS IN BANGLADESH WERE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST
AND FEARFUL. DR HENRY AUSTIN OF THE CONGRES SAID THAT
THE USA WANTED TO BLOCK THE REPROCESSING PLANT FOR
PAKISTAN BECAUSE IT WOULD GIVE PAKISTAN NUCLEAR WEAPONS
CAPABILITY AND THUS THE GOI SHOULD BE CAREFUL IN
COMMITTING ITS OWN NUCLEAR PROGRAM SOLELY TO PEACEFUL
USES. HE ALSO WARNED OF HUGE US ARMS SUPPLIES TO
IRAN AND THE BUILD-UP OF DIEGO GARCIA. A CPM MP
ATTACKED THE US ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES INCLUDING
DIEGO GARCIA AND AID TO SOUTHERN AFRICAN RACIST GOVERN-
MENTS. WHEN SOME CONGRESS MPS EXTOLLED TIES WITH
THE SOVIETS, JANATA MPS RESPONDED WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USSR AND THE BENEFIT INDIA HAD
DERIVED FROM ITS TREATY WITH THE USSR. SEVERAL JANATA
MPS ADVOCATED TIES WITH ISRAEL. ACCORDING TO SAMACHAR
PRESS ACCOUNTS, MR VAJPAYEE IN HIS CONCLUDING REMARKS
AT THE END OF THE DEBATE RESPONDED TO PERHAPS THE
MOST PERSISTENT QUESTION ASKED BY MPS DURING THE
SESSION: FACILITATING THE ISUANCE OF PASSPORTS. THE
FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT THE PROCEDURES WOULD BE
SIMPLIFIED AND THAT THE SYSTEM OF POLICE VERIFICATION
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FOR PASSPORTS MIGHT BE ELIMINATED.
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

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